

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 5173

DEPT FOR EUR/RPM, EUR/SOV

FROM USDEL CSCE

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE
SUBJ: CSCE BELGRADE: ANALYSIS OF REMAINING ISSUES

SUMMARY: VIRTUALLY ALL ISSUES IN AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF MAIN BELGRADE MEETING HAVE BEEN RESOLVED TO OUR SATISFACTION. THERE REMAIN TWO UNRESOLVED ISSUES: DURATION OF WORK OF WORKING BODIES (COMMITTEES), AND OVERALL DURATION OF THE MEETING. THE SOVIETS HAVE TAKEN AN ADAMANT STANCE FAVORING A FIRM CUT-OFF IN BOTH CASES, WHEREAS WE HAVE FAVORED ARRANGEMENTS COMPRISING TARGET DATES PLUS CONSENSUS-TO-CLOSE. WE ARE NOW FACED WITH A POLITICAL DECISION AS TO WHETHER TO ACCEPT A COMPROMISE SOLUTION ON THESE ISSUES. THIS TELEGRAM ANALYZES THE ISSUES INVOLVED AND RECOMMENDS THAT WE CONTINUE TO SEEK IMPROVEMENTS BEFORE AGREEING TO A COMPROMISE. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH VIRTUALLY ALL PREPARATORY MEETING ISSUES RESOLVED,
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SOLVED TO OUR SATISFACTION, THE MAIN MEETING IS ASSURED OF AN AGENDA AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WHICH WILL PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A THOROUGH REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION, CONSIDERATION OF NEW PROPOSALS, AND PROVISIONS FOR FURTHER FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS IN THE FUTURE. NEGOTIATION HAS NOW NARROWED TO TWO ISSUES ON WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE TAKEN A VERY TOUGH STANCE: DURATION OF THE WORK OF THE WORKING

BODIES (COMMITTEES) AND OVERALL DURATION OF THE MEETING. THE SOVIETS WANT A FIRM CUT-OFF DATE FOR BOTH WORKING BODIES AND THE MEETING, IN ORDER TO AVOID BEING EXPOSED TO AN OPEN-ENDED SESSION OF CRITICISM, AND TO INTERMINABLE NEGOTIATIONS ON AMBITIOUS NEW PROPOSALS. WE HAVE SOUGHT TARGET DATES WITH CONSENSUS-TO-CLOSE, WHICH WOULD RETAIN THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OPEN-ENDED MEETING. OUR REASONING HAS BEEN THAT, WHILE WE DID NOT WANT AN ENDLESS MEETING, WE WISHED TO PERMIT SUFFICIENT TIME FOR A THOROUGH REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION, AND TO AVOID THE FILIBUSTER TACTICS WHICH THE SOVIETS MIGHT USE WITH A FIRM CUT-OFF DATE TO AVOID A THOROUGH EXCHANGE ON IMPLEMENTATION. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WESTERN VIEWS ON THIS MATTER HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SPLIT; THE FRG AND DENMARK HAVE CONSISTENTLY FAVORED A CUT-OFF DATE IN ALLIED CONSULTATIONS.

2. AS NEGOTIATIONS HERE HAVE PROCEEDED, MORE AND MORE WESTERN AND NEUTRAL/NON-ALIGNED (NNA) DELEGATIONS HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THEIR INTERESTS HAVE BEEN SATISFIED; THIS HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY TRUE DURING WORK OF INFORMAL CONTACT GROUP THIS PAST WEEK, WHICH RESOLVED SEVERAL KEY PENDING ISSUES. WESTERN AND NNA DELS HAVE ALSO CLEARLY BEEN IMPRESSED BY STRENGTH OF SOVIET DETERMINATION ON THE DURATION QUESTION. FROM THE DAY THEY ARRIVED HERE THE SOVIET DEL STATED REPEATEDLY THAT THEY HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FLEXIBILITY ON THIS POINT. GRADUALLY, WESTERN AND NNA INTEREST IN STANDING FIRM ON THE TWO DURATION ISSUES HAS ERODED, CONFIDENTIAL

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UNTIL SPANISH REP, IN ATTEMPT TO FIND FINAL SOLUTIONS, PUT FORWARD HIS OWN PROPOSAL INCLUDING LANGUAGE WHICH SOVIETS HAVE ALREADY SAID THEY COULD ACCEPT ON BOTH DURATION ISSUES. NNA DELS EMBRACED SPANISH SOLUTIONS, AND SEVERAL ALLIED DELS (NORWAY, FRG, GREECE, TURKEY, DENMARK, ITALY AND CANADA) HAVE TOLD NATO CAUCUS THEY CAN ACCEPT IT. WE, ALONG WITH UK, FRANCE, NETHERLANDS, IRELAND, PORTUGAL AND ROMANIA, ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE LANGUAGE ON THESE POINTS, AND WOULD LIKE TO BRING IT BACK TO SOME FORMULA WHICH WOULD BETTER REFLECT OUR ORIGINAL POSITIONS. WE HAVE NO IDEA HOW FIRMLY THESE DELEGATIONS WILL STICK TO THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS.

3. THE LANGUAGE ON BOTH POINTS REPRESENTS COMPROMISES. ON THE DURATION OF THE WORKING BODIES, THE PERIOD OF WORK (NOW ACCEPTED BY THE SOVIETS) HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO DECEMBER 9 -- ONE WEEK BEFORE OUR ORIGINAL TARGET DATE FOR ENDING THE MEETING, AND LONGER THAN WE ORIGINALLY EXPECTED

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TO HAVE FOR COMMITTEE WORK. THIS WILL PROVIDE 7-9 WEEKS
OF COMMITTEE SESSIONS, WITH FIVE MEETINGS PER WEEK. IN
ADDITION, THE DOOR IS LEFT OPEN IN THE SPANISH DRAFT FOR
CREATION OF DRAFTING GROUPS TO FINISH UP THE LEFT-OVER WORK
OF THE WORKING BODIES (PRESUMABLY THEY WILL BY THAT TIME
BE DRAFTING THEIR PORTIONS OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT).
CONSENSUS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SET UP SUCH GROUPS, BUT
SHOULD THERE BE A GENUINE NEED, THIS MIGHT BE ACHIEVABLE.
HOWEVER, THE PRESENT SPANISH LANGUAGE CLEARLY STATES THAT THE
WORKING BODIES WILL END ON DECEMBER 9, LEAVING NO OPENING
WHATSOEVER FOR SEEKING AN EXTENSION SHOULD WE FEEL ONE IS
NECESSARY AT THAT TIME.

4. THE LANGUAGE ON DURATION OF THE MAIN MEETING ALSO IS
AMBIGUOUS. WHILE IT INDICATES THAT THE POSSIBLE EXTENSION
OF THE MAIN MEETING INTO 1978 SHOULD BE ONLY FROM MID-
JANUARY UNTIL MID-FEBRUARY, (LEAVING THE POSSIBILITY FOR AN
EXTENSION OF A FEW DAYS AT THE END), IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT
CONSENSUS MUST BE REACHED BOTH ON THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT
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AND ON THE DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING, BEFORE THE
MAIN MEETING CAN CLOSE. WHAT THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF THESE
TWO POSSIBLY CONFLICTING MANDATES WOULD BE IS NOT CLEAR.
AT BEST SOME CLOCK-STOPPING DEVICE MIGHT BE FOUND NEXT

FEBRUARY TO MAKE POSSIBLE A FINAL AGREEMENT; AT WORST THERE COULD BE A LONG DEBATE OVER WHICH OF THE CONFLICTING STATEMENTS TAKES PRECEDENCE.

5. THE KINDS OF IMPROVEMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE OBTAINED IN THESE FORMULATIONS AT THIS STAGE AND IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE MARGINAL IN THEIR PRACTICAL EFFECTS, BUT POLITICALLY QUITE SIGNIFICANT. IN THE CASE OF DURATION OF WORKING BODIES WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN SOME AMBIGUITY ON THEIR CLOSING DATE, POSSIBLY BY TRADING SOME OF THE TIMEHOUR ALLOTED TO THEM. ON OVERALL DURATION, ABOUT THE ONLY IMPROVEMENT WE COULD HOPE FOR WOULD BE A CLEARER INDICATION THAT CLOSURE WOULD TAKE PLACE ONLY "AFTER" ADOPTION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT AND DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING. EVEN THESE IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.

6. OUR ALLIES AND THE PRESS ARE WATCHING OUR ACTIONS CLOSELY, AND THOSE DELEGATIONS WHICH ARE SEEKING IMPROVEMENTS ARE COUNTING HEAVILY ON US TO STICK IT OUT WITH THEM. THE PRESS IS CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THE PRESENT SPANISH FORMULATIONS ARE CLOSER TO SOVIET POSITIONS THAN THEY ARE TO OUR OWN. (FOR EXAMPLE THE FINANCIAL TIMES OF LONDON HAS CALLED THE PRESENT LANGUAGE, IF ACCEPTED, A SOVIET DIPLOMATIC VICTORY.) SHOULD WE ACCEPT THIS LANGUAGE WITHOUT THE IMPROVEMENTS MENTIONED ABOVE, WE CAN EXPECT THE PRESS TO CHARACTERIZE THE RESULT AS A SOVIET WIN, AND A WESTERN LOSS.

7. THE SITUATION IS, HOWEVER, NOT THAT SIMPLE. IN ADDITION
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TO THE AMBIGUITY OF THE FORMULATIONS ON DURATION, WHICH ARE FAR FROM IDEAL FOR THE SOVIETS, THE OVERALL BALANCE OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION IS CLEARLY IN WESTERN INTERESTS. WE HAVE OBTAINED WHAT WE SOUGHT ON VIRTUALLY ALL OTHER POINTS. WITH REGARD TO THE PRESENT SITUATION, THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS WHICH MUST ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. THE FIRST IS TIME. IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE THE MEETING IN BELGRADE BEYOND THE COMING WEEK BECAUSE OF SHORTAGE OF INTERPRETERS AND UNWILLINGNESS OF THE WEST EUROPEANS TO WORK DURING AUGUST. SHOULD A DEADLOCK NEXT WEEK REQUIRE ADJOURNMENT UNTIL SEPTEMBER, THIS COULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT NEGATIVE EFFECT ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS, WHICH WOULD BE AMPLIFIED PSYCHOLOGICALLY BY PRESS COMMENTARY ON THE FAILURE OF THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY MEETING TO REACH AGREEMENT. THE SOVIETS HAVE TO CALCULATE THIS FACTOR VERY CAREFULLY THEMSELVES, AND THEY MUST SURELY WISH TO AVOID SUCH A SITUATION IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. SHOULD THE PREPARATORY MEETING HAVE TO RECONVENE IN SEPTEMBER, THE MAIN MEETING WOULD CLEARLY HAVE TO BE POSTPONED. THIS

MIGHT BE IN THE SOVIET INTEREST, BUT IT WOULD NOT BE IN OURS,
SINCE WE HAVE A STRONG INTEREST IN GETTING THE SOVIETS TO THE
TABLE TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION. A SECOND FACTOR IS THE
SIGNALS WE WILL GIVE BY THE WAY WE HANDLE THIS ISSUE. SHOULD
WE MOVE QUICKLY TO COMPROMISE WE WILL APPEAR TO HAVE FALTERED
IN THE CLUTCH IN A NEGOTIATION WHICH IS SEEN BY MANY IN
THE US AND EUROPE AS A TEST OF OUR ABILITY TO CARRY OUT A
DETERMINED BUT MEASURED POLICY ON THE MANY SENSITIVE

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DETENTE SUBJECTS WHICH ARE INCLUDED IN CSCE. THE SOVIETS
AND OUR ALLIES WILL BE QUICK TO NOTE ANY FAILURE OF
RESOLVE, OR ANY HESITATION.

8. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVE THERE ARE THREE
PRINCIPLE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO US, REPRESENTING A SPECTRUM
OF POSSIBLE NAUNCED APPROACHES FROM WHICH WE NOW MUST
CHOOSE:

A) AGREE QUICKLY TO THE SPANISH FORMULATION. THIS COURSE
OF ACTION WOULD CONCLUDE THE PREPARATORY MEETING WITH GOOD
RESULTS IN ALMOST ALL AREAS, AND MAKE POSSIBLE A MAIN MEET-
ING IN THE FALL. WHILE THAT MAIN MEETING WILL NOT BE OPEN-
ENDED, IT WILL PROVIDE ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE REVIEW
OF IMPLEMENTATION. HOWEVER, THIS COURSE WOULD SIGNAL WEAK-
NESS TO OUR ALLIES AND THE SOVIETS, AND WOULD PROBABLY BE

REGARDED AS A DEFEAT BY THE PRESS.

B) SEEK SOME IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SPANISH TEXT. THIS COURSE
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WOULD ALIGN US WITH SEVERAL KEY ALLIES, AND COULD RESULT
IN A SOMEWHAT IMPROVED TEXT. IT COULD DEMONSTRATE DETERMINA-
TION WITHOUT EXAGGERATED DEMANDS. IF CAREFULLY CONTROLLED,
IT WOULD CONVEY A MEASURED AND RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO THE
CSCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF IMPROVEMENTS WERE UNOBTAINABLE
IN A SHORT PERIOD, WE MIGHT BE FACED AT A LATER DATE WITH
A DECISION TO ACCEPT THE PRESENT COMPROMISE OR POSTPONE
THE MEETING, AND THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE
IMPROVEMENTS WE MIGHT OBTAIN WOULD CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY
THE CONDUCT OF THE MAIN MEETING OR THE EVALUATION BY THE
PRESS OF OUR SUCCESS DURING THE PREPARATORY MEETING.

C) MAINTAIN OUR FULL DEMANDS. THIS COURSE WOULD CONVEY
A DETERMINED IMAGE AND COULD OVER A LONG PERIOD BRING
MORE MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TEXT. SUCH IMPROVEMENTS,
IF OBTAINED, COULD GIVE US A MAIN MEETING WHICH WOULD BE
MORE IN CONFORMITY WITH OUR OWN VIEWS. HOWEVER, IT WOULD
PROBABLY MEAN RECESSING THE PREPARATORY MEETING UNTIL
SEPTEMBER WITH NO RESULT, AND THUS DELAY THE CONVENING OF
THE MAIN MEETING. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT IT WOULD
YIELD MORE THAN MARGINAL IMPROVEMENTS, AND IT WOULD ALIENATE
MANY WESTERN AND NNA PARTICIPANTS IN CSCE.

9. WE FAVOR OPTION B. WE BELIEVE THE SPANISH TEXT SHOULD
BE IMPROVED BEFORE IT IS ACCEPTED, FOR SUBSTANTIVE AND
PUBLIC RELATIONS REASONS. THIS WILL NECESSARILY HAVE TO
BE A SHORT TERM EFFORT, SINCE IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CON-
TINUE THIS MEETING BEYOND AUGUST 5, AND WE DO NOT CONSIDER
IT IN OUR INTEREST TO RECESS THE PREPARATORY MEETING WITH
NO RESULT, THUS DELAYING THE MAIN MEETING. WE WOULD
RECOMMEND THAT WE BE INSTRUCTED TO SEEK THE KINDS OF IMPROVE-
MENTS MENTIONED IN PARA 5 ABOVE IN THE COURSE OF THE COMING
WEEK. OUR EFFORTS SHOULD BE CLOSELY COORDINATED WITH THE
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BRITISH, FRENCH AND DUTCH. OTHER ALLIES SHOULD BE ASKED
TO JOIN US IF THEY CAN, BUT AT LEAST NOT TO HINDER OUR
EFFORTS BY STATING OPENLY THAT THEY CAN ACCEPT THE SPANISH
PAPER. WE WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER
TELLING DOBRYNIN THAT WE WILL NEED SOMETHING MORE THAN
THE PRESENT SPANISH COMPROMISE. WE WOULD PLAN TO MAKE

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON OUR READING OF THE SITU-
ATION TOWARD MID-WEEK, FOLLOWING INITIAL MEETINGS OF A
NEW CONTACT GROUP AND A BILATERAL DINNER SOVIETS HAVE
ARRANGED WITH US ON AUGUST 2.
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